



# Stop Climate Chaos Scotland strategic framework 2025–2027

## About Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS) is Scotland's climate coalition, bringing together over 70 civil society organisations campaigning together on climate change.

Our membership is diverse and includes national and community organisations working on:

- Climate justice
- Environment and nature
- Gender and social justice
- Faith and belief
- International development
- Worker and human rights
- Health and inequality

Together, we represent hundreds of thousands of people across Scotland and stand in solidarity with communities most affected by climate impacts around the world.

We collaborate with our members to build strong public support for faster climate action. We use this support to encourage decision-makers to put in place fair, effective policies to reduce emissions.

Our shared goal is for Scotland and the UK to take full responsibility for the past and present climate damage we have caused, leading to action that quickly lowers our emissions and moves away from our reliance on fossil fuels in a way that is fair and beneficial to everyone.

Our governments must also provide meaningful support to help the most affected communities adapt and recover from climate impacts, in Scotland and globally.

## The context and how this impacts our strategy

Global temperatures have already risen by 1.3°C since the 1990 baseline, and the United Nations warns that current policies in place to address climate change, if implemented, would result in 3.1°C of heating. Yet we are already seeing catastrophic consequences – particularly in the Global South, and increasingly in Europe. The science is clear that there is no safe level of climate change: every fraction of a degree of warming will accelerate and deepen impacts – claiming lives, destroying livelihoods, and intensifying hunger and displacement, with the most marginalised communities who did least to cause it being impacted most.

Scotland's emissions have halved since 1990, but Scotland has missed nine of the last 13 annual climate targets, and while the 2045 net zero target has been kept, annual and 2030 legal climate targets have been scrapped. The pace of action to reduce emissions in key sectors is too slow, in part due to a lack of sufficient investment, but also due to fears of a political backlash to changes that will require alterations to the way our economy and society operates.

Alongside this, we continue to live in volatile, dangerous and unpredictable times, with the multilateral global system under significant pressure. Worsening climate impacts will only add further instability. This strategy will likely be delivered against this backdrop, with increased global conflict and political polarisation, and populist narratives and parties likely being more successful in elections.

Instability and rising prices linked to volatile fossil fuel markets are already having a direct impact on issues such as food, heating, and housing in Scotland. Ahead of the Holyrood elections in 2026 we will likely see anti-climate narratives and less progressive voices capitalise on the genuine concerns people have - which have the potential to slow much-needed climate action. We must reflect on this and aim to do what we can to counter this in our approach and tactics.

Firstly, we need to call for ways to achieve the transition to a low carbon, more equal society in Scotland and across the UK, which is simultaneously fast (minimising climate impacts), fair (for people, workers and communities everywhere), and funded in a way that reflects the principles of the polluter pays and social justice.

While ensuring we remain true to climate science and our values, we will avoid adding to polarisation and show how climate action can address the global inequalities that are being exacerbated by the climate crisis. By framing our demands consistently in terms of fairness, the wider societal benefits - such as warmer homes, improved health and green jobs - and how they address other crises, we can give hope and build and demonstrate public support. To build support further, we must also be pragmatic, yet robust, and champion policies that are likely to land well with both politicians and the public by delivering real benefits to people's lives, to drive a race to the top ahead of the 2026 election. By exploring how to embed adaptation into our messaging, this can also help to build connections and address a matter of increasing public concern.

Whilst we will avoid vilifying particular groups, research and experience has shown that linking fairness to the gross injustice of fossil fuels companies' multi billion pound profits, as well as the excessive emissions of the richest, does resonate with the public. We will continue to make such links responsibly, while focusing on the need for policy and systems changes to address them.

Secondly, continuing to build and diversify our membership and connect with other crises will help us better understand the concerns of and centre and platform the voices of those most impacted by the climate crisis in Scotland and those most likely to be left behind if the transition is not just. It will also help us to deepen our intersectional understanding of the impacts of the climate crisis, and potential responses to it.

Finally, in response to years of positive rhetoric and ambition not resulting in the speed or depth of action required, we will shift in focus from the setting of targets or strategic commitments to the use of tangible deliverables as our primary metrics for success.

## Theory of change

### The problem:

We have lost political consensus on climate action, with an increasingly vocal counter lobby contributing to views widely held by politicians that climate policies are unpopular with the public (voters) and/or are too expensive to implement. As a result, they are too often avoiding or delaying action, while placing too much faith in unproven technological solutions to reduce emissions. This is not only resulting in emission reduction being too slow, but also people in Scotland missing out on the benefits of a just transition, affecting marginalised groups most severely. At the same time, as a rich historical emitter – and one that continues to cause climate damage today – Scotland is not playing its fair part towards minimising global temperature rises.

### Our role and what we bring:

SCCS is Scotland's large and diverse climate coalition, made up of members with significant policy and campaigning expertise, who together represent hundreds of thousands of people in Scotland. We present and promote ways to overcome the perceived barriers by showing that there is broad support for action, while building this support further through our campaigns and advocating for popular policies.

We provide convening spaces for our members and wider stakeholders that enable them to learn and collaborate, strengthening and building the climate movement while helping us reach new audiences.

We also identify and promote solutions to drive down emissions in ways that are fast and fair, while holding decision-makers to account for their actions, or lack thereof.

### Outcome:

The key moment of the Scottish elections in 2026 helps to drive the fast and fair action needed by the current and future Scottish governments, and – by extension – also by the UK government, by:

- Creating a moment of significant political jeopardy during which the strength of political parties' actions and commitments to address the climate crisis will be judged by voters.
- Giving the current Scottish government a political imperative to bolster their climate action record by getting on with the positive things they have committed to doing, but so far failed to deliver, and to go further, through showing how climate policies can also address inequalities and other crises, demonstrating and building strong public support, creating political space and sharing ways of addressing the barriers to delivery.
- Using positive examples at UK level to drive action in Scotland, and vice versa, encourage joint working and a race to the top.
- Demonstrating and building strong public support for all Scottish parties to make strong manifesto pledges to show how they would deliver the emission reductions needed to get on track to meet net zero by 2045.

- Developing a strong shared narrative about climate action being a vote winner, including by demonstrating the links to the wider societal benefits that climate action can deliver, and how policies could be fairly funded.

## Key elements of our 2025–2027 strategy

- Under-pinning our continued political influencing with a stronger focus on public engagement to build and demonstrate public support for action. Our role in that public engagement is to:
  - Provide resources, events and content for members to share with their supporters, including through the use of new technologies;
  - Provide creative and engaging moments for mobilisation that members can support;
  - Amplifying member-led campaigns and mobilisations to wider audiences.
- Political consensus led to the creation and strengthening of Scotland's legal climate targets, so we will aim to rebuild this and reversing a race to the bottom.
- Greater recognition of SCCS's convening role, creating more opportunities to bring diverse stakeholders together while connecting climate action more strongly with other injustices, including poverty and inequalities, and those related to race, gender and disability.
- Building the movement through expanding our membership to be more diverse and active, helping us to reach different and larger audiences through our members, while building our collective influence.
- Renewed focus on Scotland's highest emitting sectors – buildings, transport and agriculture and land use – as well as securing a faster transition from fossil fuels.
- Given the deep inequalities that sit at the heart of the climate crisis, a strengthened focus on embedding fairness across our work, both in how actions are financed, delivered and assessed.
- Greater clarity and shared understanding of the principles behind our messaging, our shared vision and narrative.
- More detailed monitoring and evaluation of our activities – judging their success by whether or not they meaningfully contribute to securing the actions we want to see to reduce emissions, rather than a focus on the creation of targets or vague commitments to act in the future. We will be agile in adapting our tactics, where necessary.
- To make a plan for how we will embed messaging and demands about adaptation into our work early into the strategy period.
- To make a plan for working with other networks and communities to influence the delivery of climate policies by local authorities early into the strategy period.

# Our shared vision

## for 2030

For Scotland and the UK to take full responsibility for our past and present climate damage, through:

**1 Significantly faster action to reduce emissions and transition away from fossil fuels in a way that is fair and delivers wider societal benefits**

**2 Standing in credible solidarity with the most climate-impacted communities in Scotland and around the world, providing meaningful resources and enabling locally-led responses**



### Our work

**Key moments:** Responding to and strategically shaping key external events and coming together for our own campaign moments

**Policy:** Advocating for credible joint coalition policy positions

**Messaging:** Using impactful shared messaging to communicate with and mobilise the public to raise their voice in support of climate action and justice

**Convening:** Bringing diverse members and stakeholders together to share information and expertise, and to jointly plan and deliver activities



### Our role

**To develop and maintain** a strong, diverse coalition, and convening spaces for wider stakeholders to meet and collaborate

**Build and demonstrate** the breadth and depth of support for climate action and justice at key moments in order to win practical and political public support for change

**Advocating** for fast and fair climate action that delivers wider societal benefits for both current and future generations



### Our positioning

A diverse, trusted and expert coalition, that deploys a mix of connected insider and outsider campaign tactics at different moments to secure fast and fair climate action and justice

### Our goals

#### Goal

**1**

Public demand for action is impossible for politicians to ignore, and climate is a priority issue at the 2026 election

**How we will do it:**  
Design impactful campaigns, communications and opportunities to mobilise supporters with members, so that they support and promote these

Develop clear, consistent messaging and a vision that inspires our audiences to engage and take action  
Our political influencing work is supported by public engagement so MSPs hear more from their constituents about climate

**How we will do it:**  
Proactively recruiting new members to ensure that SCCS members represent a wide range of interests, areas of expertise and audiences  
Maintaining strong relationships with existing members  
Supporting and working with other coalitions and networks  
Providing convening and info sharing spaces

#### Goal

**2**

A clear shift from government rhetoric and plans to the delivery of fast climate action that meaningfully minimises further impacts and is fair to people, workers and communities

**How we will do it:**  
Communicate SCCS's policy priorities to decision makers in a way that connects them to other key issues and wider societal benefits

Build relationships with targeted decision makers and officials to better understand the barriers to delivery

Ground our advocacy in existing and new SCCS led and other research, international climate justice, just transition principles, and racial, gender, disability justice

Monitor progress and hold government accountable

#### Goal

**3**

The climate movement is better connected and more active, and SCCS has more diverse members

#### Goal

**4**

SCCS has a sustainable funding and staff model, and the resources needed to deliver our strategy to a high standard

**How we will do it:**

Proactively recruiting new members to ensure that membership fees cover core costs

Annual review of membership fees to consider if they need to be increased  
Annual request to members for additional donations towards specific projects

Establishing an external fundraising strategy

Decide on and recruit for a longer term staffing model that delivers the goals in this strategy

**Examples of activities:** Photo stunts, mass lobbies, e-actions / Member and public webinars and training sessions / Social media and newsletter content, media partnerships and regular opinion pieces / Coordinated joint letters / Policy briefings and research / Polling to show public support / Consultation responses / Parliamentary events / Convening events for members and stakeholders / Legal challenge, monitoring, reporting